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ABSTRACT

This booklet describes the learning experiences that take place in and as a result of a learning laboratory. Part one presents a brief history of the group dynamics movement, focusing especially upon the history of the National Training Laboratory of the National Education Association. Some significant characteristics of laboratory learning are presented, along with important ground rules of training group activity. Also, a brief review of some relevant learning theories is included. Part two describes the group dynamics laboratory at Indiana State University, its background and development, the staff, the students, and the training sessions. Part three is a report of the findings of a 1973 follow-up study of former laboratory participants that was designed to ascertain if the stated purposes of the course were being accomplished and whether the learning designs had any lasting effects. Finally, the present state of the laboratory approach to learning is summarized in part four. A bibliography is also included. (Author/RC)

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RE-EDUCATION IN HUMAN COMMUNICATIONS:
The Laboratory Method of Learning in Groups

GLEN J. BROWN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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The material for this bulletin was prepared by:

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January, 1976

FOREWORD

The bulletin you hold is the result of several years planning, effort, and experimentation in the field of Group Dynamics at Indiana State University. The advent of the Group Dynamics Laboratory at Indiana State University in 1969 was preceded by many earlier efforts which took place in various classes and informal groups. Fortunately, the School of Education of Indiana State University had several members of the faculty who had received training in group dynamics and associated fields and who were enthusiastic in their commitment to develop their own and others skills in human relationships and communications. The leadership within the School of Education encouraged their efforts.

Out of this ferment the Group Dynamics Laboratory was born. The activities of the lab have not been a grand and glorious success story. Like any exploration into untracked territory the journey has been marked by frustrations, tribulations, and many discouragements. And yet, the group laboratory method of learning has proved its value. There is today a general acceptance of the approach, and the activities which were once regarded as "far out" are now accepted as a part of the general mix of professional preparation.

Although group laboratories are not uncommon on college and university campuses today, information about them is not easily found. Exchanges of "what we do and how we do it" are lacking. The literature is often confined to reports of experimental studies or to philosophical essays. In this bulletin, Dr. Brown has addressed himself to sharing his and other's experiences in the group method of learning. He presents a history of the group dynamics movement, an account of the group dynamics laboratory at Indiana State University and the results of a follow-up study of the participants of the laboratory. More specifically, he has presented a "what we do and how we do it" of one group laboratory.

Case studies of successful curriculum practices are always valuable, not only for sharing with others who hold the same objectives, but also for those who seek understanding of areas new to them. If this bulletin can aid those who want to know more about group dynamics as a route to learning, it will have served its purpose.

Dr. T. C. Venable
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MUTATIONS FOUND ON THE INNER FACE OF CAPTAIN BELL'S JOURNAL

. . . . and so, by God, I wish I could meet myself, and be introduced, as a perfect stranger might -- for then I could maybe judge my being, my soul if that thing exists . . . . and my opinions.

Who in the world would not treasure, and at the same time fear, such a meeting? Stupid as I am, it seems to me it would be the greatest adventure of all, for aren't we, if honest . . . . vastly concerned with ourselves? And when you start doubting, like me now, during these times . . . . how can you tell right from wrong? What kind of a man could have the nerve to judge his fellow human beings? Who has the nerve to set himself up as God?

I find the exploration of others a discouraging job, and in seeking myself, an even greater confusion of parts. Now, it seems to me that no person is of one dimension, neither white nor black, evil or good. It seems to me they are like a ship, of depth and beam and frequently unpredictable behavior . . . . but who really knows?

Ernest Gann's Twilight for the Gods

PREFACE

> What must be realized is that every human being is a problem in search of a solution. Some are merely parts of the problem, while others contribute part of the solution. Most of us--all of us--need a sympathetic ear and a solution to the problem which is the meaning of our lives--what our lives are, what they should be.
>
> Ashley Montagu

Indiana State University since the spring of 1969 has offered through the School of Education a course, Education 415-515, Group Dynamics Laboratory. Although such courses have been in existence at many universities for a good many years, "group dynamics" and "laboratory learning" are terms that are still not fully understood by many within the educational system as well as by the general public. This booklet describes the learning experiences that take place in and as a result of such a laboratory

The booklet is in four parts. Part I presents a brief history of the group dynamics movement, focusing especially upon the history of the National Training Laboratory of the National Education Association. Some significant characteristics of laboratory learning are shared along with important ground rules of training group activity. Also, a brief review of some relevant learning theories is included.

Part II describes the group dynamics laboratory at Indiana State University, its background and development, the staff, the students, and the training sessions. Part III is a report of the findings of a 1973 follow-up study of former laboratory participants that was designed to ascertain if the stated purposes of the course were being accomplished and whether the learning designs had any lasting effect. Finally, Part IV summarizes the present state of the laboratory approach to learning.

I am indebted to my several colleagues and many students who helped make possible the group dynamics laboratory from which this booklet stems. Special recognition must be give to Professors Stanley Gross and David Crispin who helped develop the course and worked with me as a teaching-learning team during the first years. Since those early years, Drs. Laurence Passmore, Patrick Cerra, Forest Tate, and Will Persons and numerous doctoral students have shared in the planning and execution of the laboratory.

The process of re-education as described herein is not without its stress and accompanying problems. Appreciation must also be expressed to my former department chairpersons and to Dean David Turney and Assistant Deans Tom Venable and John Hill for their professional and moral support during some of the difficult times, but more importantly for their support of professional consultants from the National Training Laboratory's network of trainers. These highly trained people have been an asset to us in upgrading staff skills and in keeping the laboratory on target with the stated goals.

Glen J. Brown
Associate Professor of Education

THE SCIENTISTS SAY RECENTLY
THAT THEY HAVE FINALLY DISCOVERED
THE MISSING LINK BETWEEN THE
ANTHROPOID APES AND CIVILIZED MAN

. . . IT'S US.

IT IS ALSO US WHO ARE THE
MISSING LINKS BETWEEN HUMANISM
AND THE CURRICULUM

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For when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their joint wisdom you inevitably assemble with those men all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views. It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does.

Ben Franklin

PART I

BACKGROUND, DEVELOPMENT AND THEORY OF LEARNING LABORATORIES

The study of groups is not a recent phenomenon; however, the methodology described throughout this booklet is an invention of this century. More specifically, the learning laboratory with its sub-part, the training group (T Group), was discovered almost by accident in 1946. A group of social scientists* were employed to conduct a basic skills training workshop in human relations on the campus of the State Teachers College in New Britain, Connecticut, during the summer of 1946. This workshop was sponsored jointly by the Connecticut Inter-Racial Commission, the Connecticut Department of Education, and the Research Center for Group Dynamics, then located at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and presently located at the University of Michigan (Bradford, 1964, p. 81).

Group discussion, supplemented by role playing, was facilitated by the training group leaders while the researchers recorded their observations of group phenomena. The participants worked in three groups of ten persons with a facilitator and researcher assigned to each group. The evening staff meetings were devoted to sharing observations, diagnosing problems, and prescribing designs toward amelioration and/or resolution of these problems. The problems were those brought by the participants from their "back home" situations. No attempt was made to describe or deal with the "here-and-now" problems of the participants or staff.

Participants who did not return home in the evenings asked permission to attend the staff sessions. The staff consented and several participants entered the staff room primarily as observers. Dr. Kenneth Benne describes what happeded as having an "electric effect" upon both the staff and the participants as the participants entered into the dialogues of the session. Participants both denied and supported the accuracy of observations of the same phenomenon. Their enthusiasm for the here-and-now discussion of their behavior gave birth to what appeared to be . . . "a potentially powerful medium and process of re-education . . ." (p. 81).

The following summer this same staff supplemented by several other social scientists organized a three-week workshop involving other institutions at Gould Academy in Bethel, Maine.

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*Comprised of Professors Kenneth D. Benne, then at Columbia University, Leland D. Bradford of the National Education Association, and Ronald Lippitt of the Research Center for Group Dynamics were the training leaders who were supported by a research team headed by Professor Kurt Lewin of the Research Center and three research observers (then graduate students in social psychology -- Morton Deutsch, Murray Horwitz and Melvin Seeman).

> One of the features of this session was a small continuing group, called the Basic Skills Training (BST) Group, in which an anecdotal observer made observational data available for discussion and analysis by the group. One function of the training leader was to help the group in analyzing and evaluating these data, as supplemented with data from the participants and from the training leader. (P. 83)
>
> The T-Group as we know it today developed from these BST groups (p.83).

The design of the BST workshop afforded a common framework for helping people "see their special jobs as resources one to the other " (p. 84). The helping relationship is one of bringing about changed perceptions and behavior in specific groups, especially interpersonal skills of problem solving, such as diagnosis, strategy development, implementation and evaluation relevant to the situation. The skills identified, discussed, and practiced by the five BST groups were the following:

Skill Area I: Assessment by the change agent of his personal motivations and his relationship to the "changee."

Skill Area II: Helping "changees" become aware of a need for change and for the diagnostic process.

Skill Area III: Diagnosis by change agent and changee, in collaboration, of their situation in terms of behavior, understanding, and feelings to be modified.

Skill Area IV: Deciding upon the problem, involving others in the decision, planning action, and practicing the plans.

Skill Area V: Carrying out the plan, successfully and productively.

Skill Area VI: Evaluation as assessment of joint progress--methods of working and thinking and human relations.

Skill Area VII: Continuing, spreading, and maintaining accomplished changes.

The staff for this BST workshop saw one of their major tasks as that of helping the participants build a cohesive and mature group. They listed some of the symptoms of group growth or strengths as:

a. Excellence of intercommunication among group members (common understanding, semantic sensitivity, permissiveness to discuss freely and not defensively, among others).

b. Group objectivity toward its own functioning (degree to which the group . . . [can] make and accept evaluations and analysis of its own functioning).

c. Acceptance of group responsibilities as members (willingness to accept and share leadership functions and membership responsibilities, as well as sensitivity to and encouragement of the potential contribution of each member).

d. Group cohesion or ego strength (sufficient to permit assimilation of new ideas and new members, to use conflict instead of being destroyed by it, to hold to long-term goals, and to profit both from failure and from success situations).

e. Group ability to inform itself and to think straight (ability to use resources both within and without the group and to detect and correct fallacies in group thinking).

f. Ability of group to detect and control rhythms of group metabolism (fatigue, tension, tempo, pace, emotional atmosphere).

g. Ability of group to recognize, control, and employ significant sociometric factors in its own growth.

h. Ability of group to integrate member ideologies, needs, and goals with common group traditions, ideology, and goals.

i. Ability of the group to create new functions and groups as needed and to terminate its existence when appropriate.

These dimensions of group growth were shared with the participants. As the group worked together they were periodically appraised of their process by the observer. They confronted the crises, temporary failure experiences, competitive and aggressive behaviors as they moved toward maturity. The participants developed their skills of group analysis and became aware of the resources of the members as well as the group roles needed for mature group functioning. (Pp. 84-85)

The Learning Laboratory

In their introduction to Sensitivity Training and the Laboratory Approach: Readings about Concepts and Applications,* editors Robert T. Golembiewski and Arthur Blumberg define the Training Group (T-Group) as having three major distinguishing features: "It is a learning laboratory; it focuses on learning how to learn; and it distinctively does so via a here-and-now emphasis on immediate ideas, feelings, and reactions" (Golembiewski and Blumberg, 1973, p. 6).

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*This is the text presently being used in the Group Dynamics Laboratory at Indiana State University. It contains 37 chapters, divided into six parts, representing multiple authors from many professions and academic disciplines.

The T-Group as a Learning Laboratory

As a learning laboratory the T-Group has certain specific characteristics:

1. It is an experience in creating a miniature society.

2. It is oriented toward working with processes that emphasize inquiry exploration, and experimentation with behavior.

3. It is oriented toward helping its members to learn.

4. It is oriented toward developing a psychologically safe atmosphere that facilitates learning.

5. What is to be learned is largely determined by its members, although a professional "trainer" is usually available to provide guidance. (P. 6)

Learning How to Learn

Three ideas central to the concept of "learning how to learn" (called re-education in the earlier history of laboratory education and still considered synonymous by some advocates of laboratory learning) according to the editors are:

1. T-Groups have an inductive orientation.

2. . . . what is learned in T-Groups is not at all clear, at least at the outset, for most group members . . . . Part of learning how to learn in a T-Group, then, is concerned with the development of a relatively high tolerance for ambiguity.

3. . . . In a T-Group, the teacher is any member of the group who can provide data for learning. (Pp. 7-8)

Other major features listed by Bennis are:

1. T-Groups work toward expanded consciousness and a wider recognition of available choices.

2. T-Groups embody a spirit of inquiry.

3. T-Groups stress authenticity in interpersonal relations, of knowing what you are and how you feel, as a condition for being what you are and what you feel.

4. T-Groups imply a collaborative concept of authority. (P. 8)

Concept of the Here-and-Now

The third feature of the T-Group is the concept of the here-and-now: What is happening at the moment as opposed to historical events of the distant past. Feelings, values, thoughts, prejudices, biases, here in this group, group relevant and readily verifiable, comprise much of the data for learning.

Theory

The group dynamics laboratory draws upon learning theory, personality theory, socialization theory, small group theory, group psychotherapy theory, systems theory, intersystems theory and democratic theory. Perhaps if any one theory could be brought to the forefront in support of the learning laboratory, it would be "an existential learning theory" as espoused by C. M. Hampden-Turner. It is "a cyclic process in which learning recurs in increasing depth" (Gloembiewski and Blumberg, p. 45). It is as follows:

According to

(a) the quality of his cognition
(b) the clarity of his identity
(c) the extent of his self-esteem--

↓

(d) all three of which he orders into a purposeful synthesis of his experienced and anticipated competence--

↓

(e) The subject invests with a degree of autonomy in his human environment

↓

(f) by periodically "letting go" and risking a portion of his experienced competence.

↓

(g) He will thus try to "bridge the distance" between himself and the Other

↓

(h) and seek self confirmation through the impact of his invested competence upon the Other.

↓

(i) According to the enhancement (or reduction) experienced by the Other, the latter will reinvest (or avoid) in a manner which moves toward synergy (or conflict).

↓

(j) The investor will attempt to integrate the feedback from his exchange into a mental map whose breadth and complexity are a measure of investing success.

Investing behaviorally in the here-and-now may prove to be painful but it is this pain that opens pathways to learning. Hampden-Turner supports this as follows:

> It was Otto Rank (1929) who saw his patients as caught between two fears, the "life-fear" of going forward, investing, atrophying, and losing individuality in a sea of humanity. It takes existential courage to go forward and endure anguish. (P. 49)

The existential learning theory spirals upward as each new learning is based on previous learnings (and unlearnings). It is a reshaping, a renewal process in which the person discovers and develops the deeper and deeper meaning of his existence.

What makes the laboratory and especially the T-Group such a popular attraction for learning? Perhaps one could refer to the premise that a need once met, no longer motivates. The biological stimulus of hunger causes the person to seek food. Once food has been consumed the stimulus ceases until the need is again present. The need to know "Who am I?" is an ever present one. As man's biological needs, for the most part, have been satisfied and his need for safety has also been met, he is now free to pursue the higher order of needs.*

For many people, perhaps for most, due to the mobile and technical society and the lack of attention received from significant others (e.g., extended family, teachers, temporary peer relations), the need for intimate relationships in which the real person can stand up has become great, and learning environments which promise to help meet personal growth needs are welcomed.

The most productive climate for learning is one which we all value and continue to search for in today's world. The emphasis in the laboratory is experiential. "We do not learn by doing only. We learn by doing under conditions in which relevant, accurate, and acceptable reactions which we are able to use get through to us" (Bradford, 1961, p. 11). Many people made notable contributions to understanding personal growth in relationships with others. The researcher would not need to look very far into the scholarly works of John Dewey or George H. Mead to discover a sound philosophical background for learning by being experimental. And two names which stand out in my mind of present day researchers and

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*A. H. Maslow's theory of personality--the theory that two basic types of motivation are important: deficiency motivation as oxygen, food, and water, and growth motivation, strivings for knowledge and self-actualization. There is a postulated hierarchy of motivation according to which physiological needs must be satisfied first followed by safety needs, love, esteem needs and finally the need for self actualization (Dictionary of Behavioral Science, 1973).

writers in the field would be Gordon Allport and Carl Rogers. One would be remiss, however, in writing about groups and learning in groups if some of the contributions of Professor Kurt Lewin were not included.

An article that appeared in the Journal of Social Issues, August, 1945, written in association with Paul Grabbe, exemplifies the contribution of Lewin. This article addresses itself to two of the main problems of re-education, namely, to bring about "change in cognition" and the "acceptance of new values" (Lewin and Grabbe, 1945, p. 56).

Lewin and Grabbe describe the re-education process as affecting one's cognitive structure, "the way he sees the physical and social worlds, including all his facts, concepts, beliefs and expectations. It modifies his valences and values . . . and it affects motoric action . . . ." They go on to say that these effects are not governed by the same laws and thus the re-educator "is confronted with certain contradictions." And "re-education cannot be merely a rational process" (p. 56).

The following are some of the premises listed by Lewin and Grabbe:

3. Even extensive first hand experience does not automatically create correct concepts (knowledge).

4. Social action no less than physical action is steered by perception.

5. As a rule the possession of correct knowledge does not suffice to rectify false perception.

6. Incorrect stereotypes (prejudices) are functionally equivalent to wrong concepts (theories).

7. Changes in sentiments do not necessarily follow changes in cognitive structure.

8. A change in action-ideology, a real acceptance of a changed set of facts and values, a change in the perceived social world--all three are but different expressions of the same process.

   a. Loyalty to the old and hostility to the new values . . . the re-educative process will normally encounter hostility. The task of breaking down this hostility becomes a paradox if one considers the relation between acceptance of new values and freedom of choice.

   b. Re-education and freedom of acceptance . . . . . Only if and when the new set of values is freely accepted, only if it corresponds to one's super-ego, do those changes in social perception occur which . . . are a prerequisite for a change in conduct and therefore

> for a lasting effect of re-education . . . We can now formulate the dilemma which re-education has to face in this way: How can free acceptance of new system of values be brought about if the person who is to be educated is, in the nature of things, likely to be hostile to the new values and loyal to his old?

9. Acceptance of the new set of values and beliefs cannot usually be brought about item by item.

10. The individual accepts the new system of values and beliefs by accepting belongingness to a group.

. . . . . .

> Re-education influences conduct only when the new system of values and beliefs dominates the individual's perception. The acceptance of the new system is linked with the acceptance of a specific group, a particular role, a definite source of authority as new points of reference. It is basic for re-education that this linkage between acceptance of new facts or values and acceptance of certain groups or roles is very intimate and that the second frequently is a prerequisite for the first. This explains the difficulty of changing beliefs and values in piecemeal fashion. The linkage is a main factor behind resistance to re-education, but it can also be made a powerful means for successful re-education . . . . re-education. (P. 64)

These premises are helpful in understanding the resistances to new learning or the re-educative process. They are also helpful in under-learning, especially the T-Group. The T-Group climate that the learner helps build is one where he can trust others with his vulnerability, his need to move forward vs. his need to maintain the status quo. Many times I have felt the ambivalent state of the learner when he is saying "no" in one breath and "yes" in the next to the disequilibrium between prior knowledge and values and his present state of being.

The learning process of the T-Group is somewhat analogous to the physical growth process of the crayfish. He must shed his old shell, his protection, or he will not grow (may even die). During this shedding process he is most vulnerable to animals of prey, so he instinctually seeks the safest environment he can find and there he grows a new, more functional shell. The crayfish finds a physically safe environment, but for humans during the re-educative process a safe environment must be

built. The T-Group's focus is on doing just that, with the potential learner being an integral part of the building process.*

Feedback is fundamental to communication. I really do not know what message I have conveyed to you until I receive your response. A properly functioning furnace responds accurately to the message of its thermostat. My cruise control unit on the car calls for gas and extra power automatically when it receives the message of need. An airplane on automatic pilot depends on accurate messages from its extremities to stay on course. Much human energy is expended in responding to inaccurate feedback during interpersonal transactions. Either the sender is unaware of the distortion, it is deliberate, or it is incomplete. Too often the message is confusing in that the spoken words are incongruent with the non-verbal behavior. A clenched fist and "I like you" at the same moment--which message is believable? Clarification of messages is the responsibility of both the sender and the receiver. Regardless of the reason, learning environments which decrease the amount of distorted or incomplete feedback are to be valued and encouraged. The laboratory described herein is managed in such a way as to focus on feedback skills development. For example, a receiver of information is asked to paraphrase what the sender conveyed. This will (or needs to) include both verbal and non-verbal expressions.

Another important feature of feedback is that it is on two dimensions. One is that of "leveling"--that is, telling you about what is going on with me, now, such as feelings and thoughts brought on by what you conveyed; and "confronting"--requesting further clarification or sharing perceived distortions or voids in the message. Comedy teams have become very successful in the entertainment field by using distorted communications, e.g., Abbot and Costello and their baseball routine "Who's on first," etc. . . . or Gracie Allen's response to the policeman when asked if her eyes had ever been checked, replied that they had always been blue! While these are gross distortions, we laugh, perhaps because we can identify with them from our own experiences with distorted communications.

The climate of trust built in the T-Group by its membership helps each person move closer to being functionally more authentic and sensitive to self and thus to others. Authentic but sensitive, usable feedback, where trust and caring are recognized norms of the group, is the essence of the T-Group for learning.

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*Perhaps the point of it all is contained in the title poem of Robert Frost's fifth volume, West-running Brook, a study in "contraries." Louis Untermeyer comments, "It is a playful argument with a serious undertone, an extended bit of fooling that turns into a philosophy, teasing and tender, a dialogue that leads up to a memorable monologue. In the backward motion of the white wave running counter to itself, 'the tribute of the current to the source,' the poet sees the origin of all of us" (Untermeyer, p. 170).

National Training Laboratory (NTL)

Laboratory learning and the Training Group (T-Group) are now approaching the end of the third decade of existence. The qualified trainers now number in the hundreds and are active on all continents. Former participants now number in the hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, and thousands more seek out opportunities to be trainers and/or participants annually. The National Training Laboratory had its beginnings as a part of the Adult Education Division of the National Education Association. Since 1966 it has become known as the NTL Institute of Applied Behavioral Science. It is still affiliated with the NEA and maintains an office staff of approximately twenty professionals at the NEA headquarters building in Washington, D. C. Its function remains that of assisting in the process of trainer development and maintaining a directory of its qualified members to assist with personal and organizational development when called upon. Its members are in private practice, private and public enterprise, and on university campuses.

The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, published bimonthly, and Social Change: Ideas and Applications, published quarterly, as well as special publications, serve to help the professional trainers keep abreast of developments in the fields of personal and organizational development.

Many, if not most, universities offer group dynamics laboratories with the T-Group, as described above, an integral part of the learning design. Private enterprise, for example, University Associates of La Jolla, California, publishes books and articles as well as conducts training laboratories for the public at large. And also in La Jolla, the Center for Studies of the Person involves itself in research, publishing and training. These are but a few of the many institutions utilizing and furthering the development of the laboratory approach to learning. Any one of these organizations could direct the interested person to other reliable resources by geographical location.

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*For example, University Associates Publishers, Incorporated, P. O. Box 80637, San Diego, California, 92133, include extensive lists of organizations involved in human growth and organizational development in their annual Handbook for Group Facilitators.

PART II

THE GROUP DYNAMICS LABORATORY AT INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Indiana State University's School of Education offered the first Group Dynamics Laboratory in its history in the spring of 1969. This course was initiated as the result of the interests and efforts of three professors in the School of Education who met each week in discussion and planning sessions during 1968. Each professor brought to these planning sessions, and eventually to the course itself, a broad background of theory and experience of working with group behavior. One had received his training under David Jenkins and his colleagues at Temple University, another had worked under Esther-Lloyd Jones and her colleagues at Columbia University, and the third, the writer, worked with John Stuehr and colleagues at Michigan State University.

Grades are earned through a contract arrangement. For example, from several objectives the student chooses those he wishes to accomplish to achieve the desired grade. They include laboratory reports (see Exhibits A and B), readings, demonstrations of learnings relevant to the course, etc.

The group dynamics laboratory has been offered once each semester and one summer term each year. It is open to both undergraduate and graduate students and is a three semester hour credit course.

Despite their strong backgrounds in the field, the staff was far from naive when it came to recognizing the risks involved in offering a Group Dynamics Laboratory and the skills needed to maintain it most appropriately as a productive learning environment. Thus, one option chosen among several was to bring in an outside resource person for two or three days each semester who would evaluate the lab and help the staff identify and develop needed skills to work more effectively with the participants and with each other. Other safeguards were also built into the laboratory. For example, the lab would <u>always</u> be a team effort in planning and in executing; all sensitivity training groups would be staffed with co-trainers; and an outside consultant would share time with each of the sensitivity groups. These conditions have been well supported by colleagues and the administration from the department chairperson all the way up to the President of the University. In fact, the cost of the outside consultant has become a regular budget item for each semester that the course is offered.

Course Organization

Organization and administration of the course in keeping with university policies was a must. Grades were to be earned through a contract

Exhibit

A GUIDE FOR THE USE OF THE LABORATORY

DIMENSION	CHARACTERISTICS/DEFINITION
DILEMMA (Can be a Question or a Statement)	New situation. Do not know what to do. Feel unsure. Several options for action.
ACTION	Overt behavior, which can be described (including in-action), in response to the dilemma.
FEEDBACK (Data)	Information about behavior in a situation is contained in our feelings and the verbal and non-verbal behavior of others.
OTHER OPTIONS FOR ACTION*	What might have felt better? Options suggested by others. Other options "I" have thought of since my dilemma.
GENERALIZATION	Meanings of feedback are combined into a verbal statement of the relationships among situations, actions, and effects so that the words can call forth similar responses from people familiar with the language.

*The writer added this dimension and wishes to give credit to Dr.

A

METHOD IN LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

LEARNING IS ADVANCED	LEARNING IS RETARDED
By awareness of a dilemma. By viewing the dilemma as a personal choice among real options. When our "stake" in the dilemma is evident.	By not perceiving the dilemma. Look of awareness is evident when there is a problem experienced and the person--sees only one way to do things--sees only vague alternatives--sees it as someone else's problem--uses inappropriate generalizations.
By experimenting, Inventing, Challenging assumptions, Enduring confusion. When the risk is evident.	By depending on old behavior to solve dilemma. By resisting change in the ways we respond. By doing nothing. By fleeing or denying dilemma. By avoiding risk.
By receptivity to feedback-listening-sensitivity to non-verbal cues-"checking out" inferences-support others in "owning" their feelings.	By blocking or distorting the reception of feedback-insensitivity to others-partial listening-defending self-fleeing or denying feedback opportunities.
By asking group to help you try one or more different responses. By practicing alternate responses in out-of-group-situations.	By ignoring feelings By not trying alternate responses. By avoiding situations like the one producing the dilemma.
By deliberate and explicit conceptualization of meanings. By reviewing happenings to clarify feedback. By sharing meanings with others.	By resisting conceptualization. By avoiding the ascertaining of meanings. By sustaining feelings. By failing to review happenings. By keeping meanings to oneself.

Stanley Gross, his colleague, for the development of the other dimensions.

Exhibit B

Sample Laboratory Report (six such reports constitutes one grade contract objective).

Laboratory Report #1

Dilemma. In class a girl gave me some negative feedback which we did not deal with adequately. At the end of the session I still did not understand her perceptions of me. I was troubled about - what should I do?

Action. The following night after a book discussion, I offered her a ride back to campus. During the ride I brought up the subject of her feedback.

Feedback. The girl was really glad that I mentioned the feedback she had given me the previous night, because she had been thinking it over and had realized that she hadn't meant what she said. She was glad to have the opportunity to talk again. I was really glad that I had brought it up.

Options. 1. Take no immediate action and hope that an occasion will arise again in class that will allow us to deal with the feedback.

2. Discredit her negative feedback by rationalizing that it was invalid.

3. Put the topic on my personal agenda for the next class meeting.

4. Talk to the girl about it outside class, since it only involved the two of us.

Generalization. I need to take the initiative to explore feedback adequately so that I can profit from the information. In order for feedback to be helpful I must understand it; only then does it increase my learning.

arrangement. For example, several objectives are stated in the course outline. The student chooses those he wishes to accomplish to achieve the desired grade. The student's task is to accomplish each chosen objective and write a one-to-two page reaction to having done so.

Application

Shortly after the Group Dynamics Laboratory class was started, it became apparent that the staff needed to formalize a screening process to protect the applicant as well as the staff from inappropriate expectations. There was evidence to indicate that some people signing for the class were expecting therapy, and others were expecting to complete the class and become trainers. While the staff tried to explain to the class on opening night regarding their intentions and the purposes of the class, it appeared that many did not hear what was intended for them to hear. Thus, the application and the accompanying statement of the intended purposes of the class were developed. (See Exhibit C.)

Each question is intended to stimulate thinking and/or action along certain lines, e.g., Question 1 is meant to cause people to think about their several roles in life. Too, each response gives information about the applicant that helps get some perception of the population, e.g., the roles now being played as perceived by the potential member. As one might expect, the role examples given in the application have dominated the responses. Also, as expected, "student" has been the most frequent role mentioned.

In response to the second part of Question 1, "most important groups," the significant factor here is the extremely large number of respondents who replied, "none." This can be interpreted as a very real phenomenon for most lab participants, the problem of anomie. The groups mentioned by the applicants were for the most part those suggested by the question.

Response to Question 2, "Please describe any intensive group training experiences in which you have been involved," reveals quite clearly that approximately 80 percent of the class members had not had any such experiences. This appears to support the existence of very real unmet social and psychological needs of those who sign up for the class.

In response to Question 5, "Have you ever received professional psychological or psychiatric assistance?," some 75-80 percent have indicated that they had not received this kind of help. Those who indicated "Yes" were advised to consult with their psychologist, psychiatrist, or counselor before continuing with the class. In only one known case has a person dropped the class as a consequence of checking this out.

Question 6, "Do you agree to avoid being affected by drugs, not prescribed by a physician, while participating in course activities?," has received mostly "Yes" responses. In the four cases of "No" answers

Exhibit C

Application

Education 415/515 - Group Dynamics Laboratory

1. We want to explain what we are about - what we intend and what we do not intend. On the other side we state some purposes and some limitations. We ask that you read this material because we want to share with you our expectation for the course. We encourage you to come to our offices if you have any questions or concerns and we will deal with any needs you may have for information. We are excited by and enjoy this course, but we have learned that it is important that people have an opportunity to clarify their expectations. This material is our first offering in the learning contract.

2. We want to be in a position to advise students, prior to their enrollment, about whether the course is appropriate to their expectations. Therefore, the attached application is designed to get some information from you which would help us to decide whether we might need to talk with you about our and your expectations. We will rely on you to have attempted to clarify your expectations by reading the descriptive material and to be open with us in what you write about yourself. You might consider this your first offering in the learning contract. You will want to know:

1. Two activities are scheduled outside of usual class meeting times. Whenever the course is offered a weekend workshop is held off campus. It usually begins on Friday evening at dinner and ends Sunday mid-afternoon. When the course is offered during the academic year a twelve hour marathon is held in addition on a Saturday. Attendance at these activities is required. The student is expected to pay room, board and other expenses for the weekend, which recently has amounted to approximately $20. The dates for this semester are:

   Weekend _____ Marathon _____

2. We want to clarify the enrollment procedures:

   a. In spite of the fact that several sections may be listed, this is all one course. The instructor with whom you sign up simply handles the mechanics.

   b. Course enrollment is limited to twelve students per instructor.

   c. We do not choose to be in a position to guarantee enrollment to students who submit applications. Students are to follow usual registration procedures in gaining enrollment.

Exhibit C

(continued)

What we are about

The purposes we have in offering this course are to help you to:

1. gain new insights about yourself, your behavior and the effects your behavior has on others,

2. become more sensitive to group phenomena and to the effects groups and individuals have upon you,

3. learn to behave in ways you find rewarding,

4. develop attitudes about your interpersonal relations with which you can be comfortable, and

5. apply these learnings about self to your personal and professional roles.

To accomplish these purposes we provide a variety of intensive group experiences and develop a community devoted to learning. Though the structure is largely informal and experience oriented, we value learning from such processes as reading, planning, analyzing, decision making and writing. There are several alternative ways of demonstrating learnings and meeting course requirements.

Because of the confusion in the popular media about the nature of human relations training, sensitivity training, laboratory method, T-grouping, encounter groups, etc., it may be helpful to state some boundaries.

1. Feelings are relevant to learning and one legitimate focus of laboratory activities. This does not mean there is any intention to offer psychotherapy. The course is designed to meet educational, not psychotherapeutic purposes.

2. Feeling-relevant learning activities may be stressful for some students. Though this is but one focus for learning activities, students who are undergoing psychotherapy or intensive counseling are advised to consult their therapists before enrolling.

3. The educational purposes of the course direct the activities toward application to the student's personal and professional roles. The course does not prepare the student to become a T-Group trainer or consultant. Indiana State University does not offer a program which prepares persons for the trainer role.

Exhibit C

(continued)

4. Our experience indicates that the use of many drugs interferes with the processes of learning as designed in this course. Therefore, students are asked not to come to class meetings, the marathon and group and community meetings on the weekend while under the influence of drugs not prescribed by a physician.

_____

_____/_____/_____
(Date of Application)

Education 415/515, Group Dynamics Laboratory

_____
(Name)

_____
(Street Address)

_____
(City, State, Zip Code)

_____
(Area Code) (Telephone Number)

Applying for (Circle One)
Semester

Fall Spring Summer

Year (Fill in) 19__

1. Please describe your most relevant roles and most important groups (e.g., student, father, teacher, wife-family, fraternity, class, office).

2. Please describe any intensive group training experiences in which you have been involved.

3. What were your reactions to these experiences?

4. What are your reasons for enrolling in the course?

5. Have you ever received professional psychological or psychiatric assistance? Yes ____ No ____. If yes, what was (is) the nature of this assistance?

6. Do you agree to avoid being affected by drugs, not prescribed by a physician, while participating in course activities? Yes ____ No ____

7. Please indicate the times you would generally find best to schedule an interview if the staff or you should request one.

the candidate indicated that the question had been misunderstood. To the best of my knowledge, no person has violated this contract.

The question of appropriateness and who should not participate in this class remains open. The staff has tried and still does try to state clearly whom the class is intended for and whom it is not intended for. In the final analysis it is the potential member who must decide as to the appropriateness of the class for his intended purposes. Thus far, there are no known serious casualties.

Regular Semester Laboratory

The first laboratory class met on a weekly basis for 2-3 hours in the evening. All labs have included a weekend retreat and a marathon. In earlier labs the staff had as many as 90 contact hours with the participants. Laboratory learning is an exciting way to learn. The staff recognized early the seductivity of this learning environment and in all fairness to themselves and their other classes decided to cut the number of contact hours. The number of evening sessions was cut from 16 to 10 or 12 so that the number of contact hours, including 18 for the weekend retreat and 12 for the marathon, was cut to between 60 and 70 hours. This figure is still in excess of the traditional 48 hours in a regular 3 semester hour class.

The energy of the staff is primarily aimed at helping the participants learn interpersonal process skills. But it is the learning process that is valued most highly. Once the learner becomes more aware of self in his transactions and owns his feelings as his, he is well on the way to being a more exciting person and an improved learner. He is less apt to alienate others in his interpersonal relations in that his process skills will keep communication open and inclusive of self and others.

The weekly laboratory allows the member to take his new behaviors to the outside environment and practice on nonmembers. While the learnings may be less dramatic in a weekly laboratory than in a concentrated one of one or two weeks, they may be of a more permanent nature in the situations encountered outside the laboratory. Human learning and change are by nature a slow process. What appears to be a big behavioral change for some members may be minute for others.

Weekly goal setting by each participant is encouraged and reporting back to at least one support person in the lab is valued. When people take this seriously, the learning appears to be greatly enhanced.

The very first night of the class is devoted basically to administrative and pre-tests. However, the staff involves the participants in some exercises to help them get acquainted with each other and to get a feel for the learning laboratory. For example, the participants, including the staff, pair up for interviews. As I interview my partner I make notes

to use later on to introduce the person to a small group of others, while my partner does the same. The last few minutes of class are used to discuss feelings, learnings, and reactions to the class. Students are invited to attend the staff planning sessions. Their input has proven to be very helpful, even though some people are unable to attend due to other commitments. One of the more significant learnings for the staff in these sessions has been the need to explain the language they use in class or to change it into simpler form.

The next two class sessions are designed as readiness sessions for the weekend retreat. The design might include some video-taping-playback sessions, listening skill development, goal setting, and responses to queries regarding the weekend.

The weekend which follows, is a straight T-Group design of 3-4 hour encounters with attention paid to de-escalation on Sunday afternoon. Concerns about learnings and going home are at least partially resolved through mini-lectures, role-playing and discussion.

The first class session following the weekend is used to discuss the weekend and to clear up any unfinished business. In this clinic session the staff introduces several possible learning designs. Decision-making exercises are set up, for example, a small circle of five or six chairs is arranged in the center of a larger circle of chairs. The options are discussed and decisions are made by those persons who choose to sit in the center chairs. One of these chairs must always be vacant. Thus, if someone comes in and sits in the vacant chair, one of the other participants must leave and return to the outside circle. This exercise generates a lot of strong feelings but does somewhat parallel the democratic process. The clinic session following this exercise is most dynamic! And the learnings are very much enhanced.

A needs census helps to identify new behavioral goals and set up means toward achievement. Different and perhaps new behaviors are tried and if successful are practiced. The process is cyclical and continuous. The staff and participants bring in materials to aid in the learning process. For example, magazines, paste, scissors and tag board to make montages are brought in for laboratory use. The montage is personal. It may depict the person's state of being in the lab, it may show a person's perceptions of others, or it may deal with goal setting; it is limited only to the imagination of the maker.

The seventh evening session is usually concerned with readiness for the marathon. The marathon is held on a Saturday and whenever possible it is held off campus. Readiness activities might consist of members identifying specific behaviors to work on during the marathon. For example, showing people that I like them, asking for help, forming a support group, and the like. Members might "pair and share" this task of selection. Sometimes the membership is encouraged to make public their goals while others help clarify and then record these stated goals so that they can check later on the person's progress. Exercises are sometimes selected

from the materials of University Associates, an organization devoted to collecting and publishing exercises from recognized human relations training personnel, or they may be designed on the spot.

The evening sessions following the marathon are devoted to closure kinds of activities. The first session is a clinic of the marathon. From this session it can usually be determined which of several learning designs will be helpful. One which is highly valued by the staff is the Human Potential exercise. This is a series of inputs systematically arranged to focus on positive reinforcement and goal setting. The format is flexible in that it can be easily adapted to the needs of the particular group.

The final night session is usually exciting and filled with many ambivalences. For example, it is both happy and sad, happy in that many have discovered that they have several new strengths and that they are more in control of what happens to them than they had thought prior to the lab, and sad in that the class is over. Post testing is carried out as quickly as possible and then one of several closure exercises takes place. For example, "Say good-bye non-verbally to those you wish to and then leave the room." Or we might "bury the class" by cleaning and straightening the room to its original condition and let people handle their good-byes any way they so choose.

Administrivia is also a part of the last session. Papers and grade statements are collected and unfinished business on anyone's part is dealt with as needed.

This has been a rather cursory overview of the semester laboratory class. Its structure and inputs vary according to the staff available and the needs of the students. It thus remains a study in and of itself each semester. It is truly a group dynamics experience in that the data generated are the subject matter of the course.

Summer Session Laboratory

The summer lab is a more intense experience than the semester one in that it meets daily for varying periods of time. The lab is called a workshop and starts on the first day of the summer session. It usually terminates during the third week after meeting each day including Saturdays and Sundays. Participation in the weekend sessions is open to negotiation should anyone need to use his time elsewhere. The number of contact hours ranges from 60 to 70 and the time arrangement is influenced by both the participants and the staff. Thus, the lab might meet from 10:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. one day and from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. another.

Summer lab has what has come to be called "homeroom" each morning. Coffee and whatever else the participants bring are available all day. Lunch is an individual affair and may occur anytime or all of the time. Homeroom is a time for sharing one's state of being and one's needs for

the day or for the lab. Resources are identified and posted on newsprint taped to the walls. Fortunately the lab has had the use of the lounge and recreational areas of one of the air-conditioned dorms each summer except 1973 when the University's Allendale Lodge was made available to the class. (The latter is a most desirable setting in that it is away from the campus and can accommodate several groups of 10-12 persons each. Located on several acres of well kept lawn and shrubs, the lodge also lends itself well to some out-of-doors activities, for example, trust walks.) Since the locations of the lab are not used by other classes during the lab's tenure, materials can be posted on the walls, or in bookcases, on tables and on the floors. This is a plus in that it helps the lab more nearly take up where it left off the day before.

Honorariums for consultants have been most adequately provided by the university up to but not including the summer of 1973. Financial stress was apparent throughout that year and funds for outside consultants were cut so that the lab could not engage National Training Laboratory personnel. Other options were picked up such as trading our staff time for time from other people, and, though this is rather burdensome, it is a way of getting much-needed outside energy for learning. Another option was to use one of our own staff as a "floater" during the retreat and the marathon. This option again falls short of the needed outside resource person. The university has since supported this part of the learning endeavor.

The staff for summer has been limited to two persons. To cope with the need for three, the elected staff has used one of the more competent doctoral students. This arrangement has worked out fairly well due to the smaller enrollments during the summer lab.

The lab is conducted in cooperation with the participants as much as possible. The homeroom generates the needs of the members and thus the design is one that remains much on target with these needs. Planning sessions are a part of the learning just as the actualization of the plans is. Needs and ideas come from both the staff and participants, more so than they do during the regular semester labs.

Weekend Retreats

From the first laboratory course to the present, the weekend retreat has been an integral part of the learning design. At first, the retreat was used for skill training on a limited basis. Each clinic session, however, brought out the need to stick closely to a T-Group format during the weekend. In other words, we needed to use the weekend for experiences which could not be accomplished as well during the shorter time periods of the regular class nights. While skill sessions and inter-group activities have not been eliminated, they are minimal during the weekends.

There are many positive attributes of the weekend encounter. For example, the population is removed from the regular environment and thus

can more quickly get with the work at hand. And the learnings during the informal part of the weekend are greatly enhanced through the informal sharing of perceptions and feelings with others who are having similar experiences. The opportunities for goal setting are plentiful, along with reassurances of moving toward accomplishment. Thus the whole milieu, both formal and informal, lends itself to learning.

The weekend does, however, have its limitations. It eliminates some would-be enrollees in the course. The retreat is required of all participants to complete the course. The athlete, the working student, and the financially poor student, for example, are not able to participate. Also, ministers must choose between the retreat and their church duties. Those people who know their other obligations must forgo the entire course because of the weekend conflict. In the summer lab, the staff has experimented and held the two-day T-Group sessions on weekdays in a location that allowed the participants to stay in their regular lodging. The learnings, however, appear to be greatly diminished by the lack of the informal sessions and by the lack of reinforcement members receive in the back-home situations.

So far it appears that the advantages of the weekend retreat outweigh the disadvantages previously mentioned. The away-from-campus and away-from-home setting also gives the staff freedom to concentrate their energies on the lab and on utilization of the consultant. The weekend retreat with the major efforts going into the T-Group appears to be the major learning vehicle of the entire laboratory class.

Marathon

The marathon is a 10-12 hour continuous session. While it is basically a T-Group, it also lends itself to skill training sessions as needed.

In the original planning for this class it was decided that the marathon should come near the beginning of the semester with the retreat near the end. The reasoning was that the marathon would be an unfreezing experience and produce a readiness for learning during the remainder of the sessions.

It became apparent to the staff that the marathon did not afford enough of the informal time that the participants seemed to need to interact and deal with such things as goal setting. Thus, the marathon and weekend retreat were transposed in time. This does seem to be a more productive arrangement. The marathon appears to allow opportunity for trying new ways of responding that have been elected by the participants during the major time portion of the lab. The weekend retreat affords the members the informal time allotments with their peers to search and to set behavioral goals. The marathon lends itself to identification of new behaviors by each member and offers them the opportunity to try them out where feedback is available.

The management of time is ever present in our lives and the 12-hour marathon is from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. However, time conflicts with other commitments have afforded very real material for negotiations, and thus the population develops its skills in this learning arena. On a few occasions the starting and ending times have been changed--for example, 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.--and once the block of time was divided into six-hour sessions.

The marathon remains a valued learning experience. Its position, near the end of the lab, appears to be on target for its purpose. Feedback from the participants tends to confirm this placement.

Staff

Early in our planning life it was apparent that our staff needed training on a regular basis. While there were options such as entering the National Training Laboratories intern program, we were unable to afford ourselves such at that time. We approached our Department Chairperson and Dean with our rationale for staff training and were afforded funds to bring in a consultant each semester from the NTL Network of Trainers or someone of similar background and skills. Through the years we have had:

Dr. Vytas Cernius - Temple University
Ms. Jo Kelsey - Episcopal Diocese of Detroit
Dr. Orin Worden - Private Practice, Detroit
Dr. Jack Saporta - Illinois Mental Health Association
Dr. Ronald Lippitt - University of Michigan
Dr. Donald King - Purdue University
Dr. Dolores Storey - Private Practice, Muskegon, Michigan
Mr. Arthur Howson - Western Michigan University
Ms. Charlotte Alderson - Chicago Episcopal Diocese

These are unique people, each with special contributions to make to the learning process. Our priority for the consultants has rested more with staff growth than with participant growth. Usually the consultant was available during the day on the Friday of our retreat to our graduate students in the School of Education and to our staff* plus interested colleagues. Approximately three hours were set aside for the working staff to share with the consultant prior to the first session with participants Friday evening and again on Sunday afternoon.

After about the third consultant visit we discovered that we could benefit more from this person by having him spend, say, a 3-hour block

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*Staff refers to those persons presently working with the lab and those who have worked with past labs or who might work in a future lab.

of time in each of the several T-Groups during the weekend. While this appears to be less gratifying to the consultant, it has greatly increased the learnings of the staff members. Feedback sessions to the staff from the consultant occur as appropriate throughout the weekend. The 2-3 hour session late Sunday afternoon with the consultant has also proven most helpful. For example, staff members ask for suggestions regarding skills they need to work on to improve their effectiveness as trainers. The consultants, for the most part, have been most generous in pointing out staff strengths as well, which is helpful after an exciting but tiring weekend.

For the most part, the staff is from our counselor training department and the Counseling Center at Indiana State University. These persons accept their assignment knowing that the course requires from three to six hours of post-mortem and planning each week. Their enthusiasm and commitment to the course and its learning process are most commendable.

Readings

The current text book is Sensitivity Training and the Laboratory Method by Robert Golembiewski. As per the course guidelines, no attempt is made to coerce participants to read all or any part of it. Some members read it prior to the class, others read as the class progresses, and some report that the text has proved to be helpful in conceptualizing some of their learnings following the laboratory. There are some who merely scan the book and there are probably some who don't even attempt to do that. Thus the staff has several relevant handouts, rather brief and to the point, for example, on giving and receiving feedback. Several suggested readings are listed and a rather extensive bibliography is available upon request. The staff reviews the suggested readings periodically and adds or deletes items based on feedback from the lab members. On the whole, the suggested readings and book discussions are valued by the participants in that they are generally used by most participants to accomplish some of the objectives for the course grade.

Participants also bring to the attention of the class journal articles, books, newspaper articles, and television drama and movie films related to the class. For example, "Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice" caused a great deal of discussion as it tended to support the fantasies of friends or reluctant members of the laboratory class. The staff has seriously attempted to introduce the participants to the pro and con issues of laboratory training.

Non-Verbal Exercises

For most persons non-verbal exercises are not new media for learning. What is perhaps new is the appropriate use of non-verbal exercises in relation to other laboratory phenomena. It is not uncommon for some participants to want to get right into non-verbal exercises. While some

staff members who are more adept at using non-verbals than others do employ them frequently, the task still remains to keep them relevant and on target with the data being generated in the lab in general. Thus the learning generated by the use of non-verbal exercises or the needs of the person introducing them are integrated into the total learning environment. For example, if eye contact is minimal in a T-Group, someone might suggest that we communicate with each member by looking directly into each other's eyes for 15-30 seconds. The group would then discuss this exercise by sharing their thoughts and feelings that occurred during the exercise. These kinds of exercises can be fun and helpful in the learning process.

Interpersonal Skill Sessions

The learning theory most in evidence in the laboratory learning environment is that proposed by Gibb. Briefly, the learner encounters a situation to which he responds with old behavior, only to discover that he does not get the response expected. He then tries a different response which may be a new behavior for him. Feedback confirms that this is a more productive response than his old behavior. He then practices the new behavior until it becomes more spontaneous for him. Valued here is the experimental nature of the learner and the learning environment. Each new response is a provisional try at new behavior. If it doesn't work to the satisfaction of the learner, he is free to try other responses. Exhibits A and B exemplify the learning model.

The primary learning resources are people interacting with spontaneity, authenticity and sensitivity to each other. However, all learners have access to handouts, textbooks and an extensive bibliography. The staff, with the members' help, is continuously assessing the needs of the learners. This is also done periodically with formal feedback forms. It is from the social milieu that the various skill training sessions are derived and then implemented.

A guiding question for the proposer of a skill session might be, "How do you know that this is appropriate? What is your evidence?" If the proposal appears to be on target, the participants readily give their support. Any reluctance on their part might be interpreted as meaning the proposal is not appropriate. The sensitive trainer will know when he is "demonstrating his own cleverness" or when he is really being "with" the members and their needs.

Some examples of interpersonal skill exercises which have been used are:

1. giving and receiving feedback
2. listening
3. clarifying
4. leveling

5. confronting

6. owning - using "I" more and "you" less in statements

7. conflict management

8. coping with defensive feelings

9. non-verbal communication

10. describing as opposed to judging

These are merely labels of a few of the more common interpersonal skill building exercises. Others are created as the situation demands. An example here would be role playing on the spot, or perhaps changing roles with another member. Perhaps a criticism of the laboratory might be the lack of time for practicing interpersonal skills. Under stress, for example in a T-Group, the learner tends to revert to old behavior, the one he has lived with the longest. While it is often risky to intervene during stressful encounters, it, nevertheless, is often productive for the learners in the long run. Transference of learnings to situations outside the laboratory setting remains a tough goal to accomplish.

Rumors*

Real or imagined, rumors are difficult, if not impossible, to prevent or control. Because of the experimental nature of the learning designs and the diversity of people along with the extremism of the popular media, laboratory learning lends itself to the possibility of rumors.

Drugs

Early in the history of this course drug usage throughout the university and the country in general was receiving a lot of attention. The staff decided that it would be counter-productive to work with groups if drugs were being used. Thus a statement requesting participants to agree to not use drugs unless prescribed by a physician was included in the application for participation in the class. To the writer's knowledge, participants have not violated this agreement.

The use of alcoholic beverages during class time is also considered to be a barrier to learning. The staff requests at each first session that persons who feel the need to use alcohol just prior to or during class should absent themselves from the class. At no time has there been

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*Rumor as used here is defined as the spreading of information out of context which causes discomfort to a person or to the laboratory in general.

any evidence of the use of alcoholic drinks interfering with the class. Most retreats have been held at Merom Institute, Merom, Indiana, which has a policy against alcoholic beverages on the premises. The writer knows of no violations of this rule. Some laboratory participants do leave the Institute during their unscheduled time and some of these do go to a bar and dance facility in a nearby town. While they do appear to let off a lot of steam and their high energy level might cause a few eyebrows to raise, the writer knows of no untoward incidents of violence or misuse of any person during such times.

People Problems

The staff erred in not meeting with the management of the retreat site prior to the first retreat. The site management was not accustomed to the experimental nature of the lab and their expectations were those of a "typical" classroom learning environment. Chairs were in straight rows and a podium was appropriately placed in the front of the room. Moving furniture about and then not placing it back in its original arrangement caused some consternation as did the noise level, non-verbal exercises, trust walks and the like. One particular incident appeared to be the scapegoat for all the built-up tensions of the management. It had been agreed that the sleeping rooms would be vacated by such and such a time. About noon on Sunday one of the participants, a young man from Cambodia who was rather dark skinned and had rather long hair, became ill and was advised to return to his room and rest on the bed. About 3:00 p.m. one of the custodians opened the door to the room and seeing the young man on the bed stated rather bluntly that he was to pay for an extra day's lodging. The spin-off from this reached the offices of the President, the Dean, and the Departmental Chairperson, and no one knows where else. The laboratory staff made a full written report to the appropriate university officials and a letter of apology was sent to the site manager and his personnel.

The laboratory has not used that facility since and has made a special effort to share ahead of time the needs and nature of the retreat. No further problems have occurred and rapport has been excellent at the three different places the lab has used since that first time.

Avoidance

At no time has the staff purposefully avoided confronting rumor issues, real or imagined. Real issues have been present in the laboratory learning environment. When warranted, they were effectively dealt with in an ethical and forthright manner. The laboratory remains open to the participation of all colleagues and administrators, the one requisite being that they must participate throughout a particular segment, for example, the weekend retreat, in all fairness to themselves and the regular membership and staff. Professors from Education, English, Business, Student Life, and Speech, for example, along with several colleagues from the Laboratory School have been participants over the years at one time or another. Their reactions have been favorable toward the laboratory.

Divorce

One person has been divorced since her participation in the laboratory. She made it quite clear in her follow-up that she had made that decision prior to the lab. However, rumors do continue, in spite of the lack of evidence to the contrary, that the divorce rate is high following a laboratory.

Summary

It appears that rumors will always be a possibility where the learning is very personal and experimental. The use of a staff team approach has been and remains a healthy safeguard toward protecting the staff, the participants and the university from unnecessary dissonance. And the use of co-trainers and outside consultants during the laboratory retreats has proven to be an excellent way of dealing helpfully with any excessive ego involvement or misjudgments on the part of the staff.

Counseling

The possibility of a participant needing the help of a counselor to help him understand his feelings, thoughts and learnings is an ever present one. In the early laboratory classes and especially for the weekend retreats and marathons, a counselor was present and available at all times. However, experience showed that this was not necessary in that the staff along with participants was able to help people through stressful periods. Further, the university maintains a Counseling Center with a well-trained staff who will readily pick up on referrals by the laboratory staff. Actually, most laboratory classes have been staffed with one or more persons from the Counseling Center staff.

The laboratory can be and often is a stressful experience for some of its members. For example, a young veteran and former Green Beret who felt very detached from the group and extremely alone discovered during high stress that one of the participants had had similar experiences during the Korean War. This Korean veteran even surprised himself when he discovered that he had the resources to be helpful to the ex-Green Beret.

At all times the staff has the telephone number of the answering service of the medical doctor on duty at the University Health Center. In the above case the staff had about decided that it would be appropriate to ask for help from the physician on duty. When the staff shared this with the group while the ex-Green Beret was in another room, the ex-Korean veteran asked if he might do something and then on his own initiative went to him. Within thirty minutes they both returned to the group and shared what they had learned, and it was no longer necessary to call the physician.

None of the laboratory classes are immune from similar situations. At this point we know of no instance of a person under stress being left without further resources. The stress may be allowed to build beyond the

point of comfort for other members of the group, but this is often a growth-producing phenomenon. Experience tends to show that too often in a stress situation people rush in and assert that the person is not strong enough to cope with the stress. This behavior is referred to as "band-aid" treatment. When stress is allowed to build, and when he has the sensitive support of one or more other persons it often is reassuring to the person under stress to know from experience that he has the strength and resources to cope with it.

Information regarding the resources of the University Counseling Center is made available to the participants as needed and several have found the Center helpful. Due to the confidentiality maintained by the Center, the group dynamics staff has learned when the Center has been used only through the client's voluntary sharing of the information. The Center does say that some of its clients are, or have been, in the Group Dynamics Lab, but at no time has it implied that the lab was harmful to a client. In fact, the Center refers many young people to the lab as a needed growth experience. Again, this is only known to the lab staff if the client-participant chooses to share such information.

Summary

In this paper the writer has shared a rather global picture of an exciting way to learn. Some attention has been given to staff quality, purposes of the course, and to the major learning designs of the course. Too, some of the strategies used for safeguarding the university, staff and students have been presented along with a brief discussion of rumor problems.

Neither the Bible nor the prophets--neither Freud nor research--neither the revelations of God nor man--can take precedence over my own direct experience.

Rogers, 1961, p. 24

PART III

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF GROUP DYNAMICS LABORATORY PARTICIPANTS

Since 1969 Indiana State University has offered a Group Dynamics Laboratory course three times a year. The instigators, a team of three professors in the School of Education, planned from the start to evaluate the laboratory by doing a follow-up study of participants, so pre- and post-data and addresses were kept on file. This part describes the results of the follow-up study made in the spring of 1973.

The purposes of the laboratory were stated as follows:

1. To gain new insights, about yourself, your behavior, and the effects your behavior has on others.

2. To become more sensitive to group phenomena and to the effects groups and individuals have upon you.

3. To learn to behave in ways you find rewarding.

4. To develop attitudes about your interpersonal relations with which you can be comfortable, and

5. To apply these learnings about self to your personal and professional roles.

Laboratory Participants

Approximately three hundred persons participated in this group dynamics laboratory over the four-year period covered in the research. An intensive search of the Alumni Office, Registrar's and Graduate Dean's Offices clearly demonstrated that fifty past participants could not be reached at their current addresses. Two hundred and fifty questionnaires were mailed. One hundred responses were received within a two-week period. A first notice, mailed to those who had not responded at the end of the two-week period, brought in another twenty responces. Sixteen additional forms were received after a second notice. Fifty questionnaires were returned unopened for lack of a forwarding address. Thus, of the 200 that can be assumed to have been delivered, 136 questionnaires were responded to almost completely, which gives a 67% return for the mailing.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was built by asking past staff what they would like to know about the population. The information requested was organized into a questionnaire and then tested by asking the spring, 1973 class to respond to it and to critique it. It was also submitted to three different colleagues with expertise in questionnaire building. The final questionnaire and follow-up notices appear as Exhibit D.

Exhibit D

TO: Group Dynamics Laboratory Alumni

FROM: Glen Brown and other Laboratory Staff

SUBJECT: Follow-up

DATE: March 8, 1973

In the spring of 1968, Stan Gross, David Crispin and I started sharing ideas which led to offering the Group Dynamics Laboratory for the first time in the spring of 1969. At that time it was listed as Education 4-525 and it is now Education 4-515. Staffing has been variable since the first year. Dave has now been at Governor's State University, Park Forest, Illinois for the past three years, and Stan is doing post-doctoral work in Community Psychology at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle. Some of you will recall Charles Nelson, Allan Johnson (Dr.) now at University Medical School, Charleston, South Carolina; or, Kathy Webb (Dr.) now at University of New York at Brockport; Jim Hilkey, psychologist at Federal Penitentiary in Terre Haute; Diane Brown, Forest Tate, Sue Dyrenforth and others who have helped in one way or another with the lab. Laurence Passmore, Pat Cerra and I staffed the lab this past fall and the present staff has Forest Tate replacing Laurie. So the staff as well as the lab remains dynamic and gains its strength from the varied staff, student participants and consultants. Indeed, we value the learnings afforded us very much! We are indebted to you and the other participants for sharing with us and helping us grow.

I am hoping that at some time during your particular experience, it was mentioned that someday we would call upon you to give us some feedback. This is my attempt to follow through on that statement. I am asking for some of your time and talent to help us confirm and/or improve our endeavors in the lab.

I would prefer to visit with each one of you personally, however, we now have approximately three hundred alumni, thus, I need to use this rather impersonal way of personally relating to you. My intent is to also use the data you share to generate a technical report and then an article for publication. Your anonymity is assured unless I personally

Exhibit D

(continued)

get your permission in writing. I hope to hear from you real soon, please.

Name _____ Circle One: Male Female

Address _____ Year of class _____

Marital status at time of class _____ Age when in class _____

Current marital status _____

Occupation _____

Briefly describe what you do:

List the positions you have held since completing class? (List current position first.)

How many encounter groups had (or have) you participated in?

a. Prior to this class? _____ b. Following this class? _____

TYPE	LOCATION	VERY VALUABLE	VALUABLE	SO-SO	NOT VERY VALUABLE	NOT VALUABLE AT ALL

The following are in relation to the Group Dynamics Laboratory class. (Please use back of page or additional pages if needed.)

1. Briefly describe any activity(ies) you have directed in which you used learnings from the course.

2. Given the opportunity, would you elect to take this class again?

   Yes ____ No ____ Comments:

3. To what degree has the course been helpful to you?

VERY HELPFUL	HELPFUL	SO-SO	NOT VERY HELPFUL	NOT HELPFUL AT ALL

Exhibit D

(continued)

Comments:

4. Describe in what ways, if any, the course has been detrimental to you.

5. Describe the characteristics of a person for whom you would deem this laboratory course inadvisable. Reason?

6. Describe one or more significant decisions you have made which were influenced by your experiences in the laboratory class.

7. Describe how friends, relatives and colleagues have responded to your participation in the lab.

Description: Comments:

8. Should there be a pre-requisite to the laboratory class? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, describe the pre-requisite experience.

9. Should there be an advanced lab? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, what should be included?

10. Have you recommended the lab to others? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, approximately how many have taken the lab as a result? ____

Comments:

11. Of all lab experiences which was least valuable? Most valuable?

12. Please share with me any other information that you feel would be helpful to us in this class.

Follow-Up B

TO: Group Dynamics Alumni

FROM: Glen Brown

SUBJECT: First Follow-Up

DATE: April 18, 1973

Several friends have returned the follow-up questionnaire. ☺

Several friends have not. ☹

Please, I need your help!

Exhibit D

(continued)

TO: Group Dynamics Alumni

FROM: Glen Borwn

SUBJECT: Second Follow-Up

DATE: May 3, 1973

Several friends have returned the follow-up questionnaire.

Several friends have not.

Please, I need your help!

Table I presents the tabulation of the responses to the questionnaire.

TABLE I

Results of Group Dynamics Follow-Up Study
1969-1972

A. Responses

Male	60
Female	76
Total	136

B. Marital Status at Time of Class

Single	69
Married	63
Divorce	4

C. Age When in Class

20-21	28
22-23	31
24-25	29
26-27	16
28-30	13
31-40	9
41-50	6
51-60	1

D. Current Marital Status

Single	52
Married	75
Divorced	5
Widowed	0

E. Encounter Groups

Prior to Class	71
Following Class	88
Very Valuable	38
So-So	15
Not Very Valuable	9
Not Valuable at All	1

F. Would You Take This Class Again?

Yes	112
No	22

TABLE I

(continued)

G. To What Degree Has Course Been Helpful to You?

Very Helpful	59
Helpful	50
So-So	17
Not Very Helpful	0

H. Should There Be An Advanced Lab?

Yes	95
No	25

I. Should There Be a Pre-requisite to Lab Class?

Yes	41
No	87

J. Have You Recommended Lab to Others?

Yes	117
No	18

K. How Many Have Taken Lab as Result?

179

Results

The data tend to support these conclusions:

1. Marital status at the time of class shows that singles were in the majority during the class, 69 single to 63 married and 4 divorced.

2. Current marital status shows a reversal of the above, 52 single and 75 married, as might be expected. However, contrary to "rumors," only one person has divorced since their participation.

3. The age range in class was 20-55 with the majority in the 20-25 age group.

4. The number of encounter groups "participated in" shows an increase from pre- to post-group dynamics laboratory. The larger numbers appear in the 1970-71 classes. The majority rated these pre- post-experiences in the Valuable and Very Valuable categories.

5. About 82 percent said they would take the lab again if given the opportunity.

6. Approximately 81 percent rated the laboratory in the Very Valuable and Valuable categories. The rest (19%) responded in the So-So and Not Very Helpful sections with no responses in the Not Helpful at All space.

7. Seventy-nine percent said that there should be no prerequisite courses to the laboratory. And 79 percent would like an advanced laboratory.

8. One hundred seventeen former participants had recommended the lab to others and at least 179 persons have taken the lab as a result of its being recommended by former members.

Present Occupation

Table II shows the occupations represented by those reporting. While teaching is by far the leading category (51 of 136 reporting), it is of special interest to note the wide diversity of occupations represented. They are listed here as reported on the follow-up form.

Briefly Describe What You Do

Very few respondents gave detailed descriptive data regarding their present occupational duties. For example, several merely wrote "teach" in response to this request. In spite of brevity, however, it is clear that by far the majority are in the people-helping professions. Teaching is but one example along with such others as agency counseling, mental health work in a hospital setting, individual counseling, group counseling, and so on. Thus it would seem that respondents to the follow-up questionnaire are in jobs which call for many personal and interpersonal skills. Even though not specifically requested to do so, several people commented that they "enjoy their work."

Positions Held Since Completing Laboratory Class

Table III shows the number of positions held since completing the class by year of class participation. The range is from one to five positions with the mode definitely in the one category. It is assumed that where there was no response in this category the person was still on the same job. Thus 92 past participants of 136 reporting were either still on the same job or had changed jobs only once.

It was not the purpose of this study to investigate job satisfaction. Speculation, lending itself to further research, might suggest that these 92 people are highly satisfied with their jobs. Or, the situation may be a reflection on the job market which has tightened during the past few years. Further speculation might be that these people are less able to risk moving to other locations, sort of a confirmation that many

TABLE II

Present Occupation of Follow-Up Subjects
(Spring, 1973)

Teachers	51	Miscellaneous	26
Art	2	Accounting	1
Coach	1	Assistant TV Dir.	1
College	3	Correctional Couns.	1
English	2	Construction	1
Health	1	Cosmotology Instr.	1
Librarian	1	Curriculum Coordinator	1
Math	2	Dental Student	1
Music	1	Director of Learning Lab for Teachers of Young Children	1
Primary	12	Director of Special Education	1
Science	1	District Executive for Boy Scouts	1
Social Studies	1	Executive Secretary Nu-Tel Comm. Corp.	1
Special Education	1	Finance	1
Teacher (not specified)	22	General Motors Advertising	1
Vocational Ed.	1	General Clerical	1
Housewife	8	Insurance Sales	1
Counselor	5	Intelligence Officer United States Navy	1
College Administration	2	Law Student	1
Graduate Student	8	Mental Retardation Parent Counselor	1
Student Personnel	3	Medical Records Secretary	1
Psychologist	2	Member, Farm Co-op Brd. of Trustees	1
Student	7	Occupancy Specialist Dept. of Housing Urban Development	1
Social Work	3	Placement Consultant	1
Upward Bound Director	2	Real Estate Broker	1
Residence Hall Dir.	6	Research Assistant	1
Minister	3	Supervisor, Reform School	1
Director, Therapeutic Recreation	2	Work in Residence Hall	1

TABLE III

Number of Positions Held Since
Completing Laboratory Class*
(Spring, 1973)

	One	Two	Three	Four	Five
1972	20	3	0	0	0
1971	17	16	9	0	0
1970	12	6	1	1	0
1969	3	3	3	0	1

*Forty persons did not report a new job since completing the class. It is assumed that they are still on the same job they held when taking the class.

people in the helping professions are frozen at Maslow's Level II, Security. Another guess might be that these persons have been assimilated into the social milieu of their present job environment and suffer very little, if any, dissonance with their present status. One could go on conjecturing and generate some testable hypotheses for further study.

Caution must also be used in looking at these data in that the numbers responding by year also varied. Nonetheless, the evidence does appear to support in general that lab participants are fairly stable job holders (over the four years studied) where the median age is in the early twenties.

Encounter Group Participations

The responses tend to show that most of the class members had not participated in encounter groups prior to the class. And approximately the same number indicated that they have not participated in any comparable activities since the class. The total number of participations prior to class was 62 and following the class 69. However, a few persons accounted for several participations, for example, one person reported "several" while some others reported anywhere from 2 to 5 such experiences. It would be reasonable to state that the class does not attract very many "T-Group Bums" nor does it cause people to become such.*

*T-Group Bums as used here refers to those persons who go from one T-Group experience to another on a regular basis. This is not known to be good or bad; it depends on the individual.

The before and after class encounters as described by the subjects would not necessarily fall in the realm of group dynamics. For example, Gestalt Therapy, Group Counseling, Psychotherapy, Bioenergetic Analysis and Interaction Analysis have as their purpose a therapeutic or instructional goal to accomplish. Some of the responders, however, have participated in other group dynamics laboratories and closely related activities. For example, a leadership training workshop or a black-white encounter weekend may more closely resemble the group dynamics laboratory, especially where the goal is one of more clearly understanding self through increased awareness and sensitivity to interpersonal relationships.

Interestingly enough, where responders were asked to evaluate these experiences on a continuum from Very Valuable to Not Valuable at All, the ratings mostly fell in the Valuable category. There were only 22 responses in the So-So to Not Valuable at All category.

The locations for such pre-post class encounters ranged from one at Bethel, Maine, to several locally, for example, Mental Health Center, Counseling Center, and the like. The local Federal Prison through its drug abuse program has afforded learning opportunities in Transactional Analysis to students at Indiana State University. Several members responded that they have taken these opportunities to enhance their own personal growth as well as to develop skills in group procedures. Other experiences are often listed as being on a college campus, i.e., Hillsdale College, LaSalle College, Vincennes University, and the like.

It would appear that further experiences have been sought at reputable places and institutions of higher education.

Activities Directed, Using Learnings from the Course

While the questionnaire asked specifically for "activities you have directed," the responses included many instances of personal awarenesses and new behaviors. The range of responses went from "none" (only two persons) to long paragraphs of descriptive data such as follows:

> I use sensory awareness as a theme to many of my exercises with especially young children. I promote self-awareness a great deal by "direct" conversations in groups or individually. I have a rap group with 10 eighth grade kids on several topics. I designed a format very similar to what we used in the G.D. Lab. Topics, define terms, discussions, solutions and conclusions. With all ideas written on the board, I also tape and transcribe the sessions and every student keeps a cumulative record. I have employed role play, fantasy, discussion groups to solve problems. I did an exercise to rate, Ideal vs. Real Self; self realization as to typing ourselves to animals, having others describe each other, etc. I made my first topic 1. Self-Image and discussed real vs. ideal, social acceptance, self-acceptance, etc., and the final topic 8, is Self-Realization and Future. In this last topic we take out the goals we set for ourselves in the first topic and see just how we progressed or regressed in the 10

week program. I have done many exercises and used certain methods I developed in G.D. Lab. I have more written information on the format of my rap group if you'd like it.

The questionnaire presented an open question in that there were no specific categories to check. Thus, it is assumed that the responses were those most quickly brought to mind by the question. If one were to send out a check list including those items which were reported ten or more times it seems reasonable to assume that most persons would have checked some items as relative to themselves. For example, approximately half of the population responded that the class was helpful in improving their day-to-day human relations. Several said that they were more initiatory and practiced less avoidance behavior than prior to the cales.

As might be expected with the greater part of the population coming from the area of education, improved classroom social climate was mentioned some twenty-five times. For example, it was reported that conflict management and/or resolution was now confronted more often than prior to class and decision by consensus or group participation in decision making using formats from the class, e.g., fish bowl or NASA, was used often in the helping relationship.

Others wrote that they found themselves more self-assured in their interpersonal relations. Several expressed that they are now better able to keep communication open with their friends, family and colleagues. One person said that he was better able to work through awkward situations now than before class.

As for the utility of the course in directing activities, the activities most often mentioned would include role-playing, in-service education workshops, counseling sessions, classroom activities, decision making, self awareness exercises and improving listening skills.

Several mentioned that they had completed their doctorates and achieved further training in group work. These persons are active therapists and cotherapists in mental health centers and hospitals. They are using not only the skills developed in this class and others but those they have been able to develop through their own experiences in their work.

If there is one overriding theme to the responses it is that these persons have discovered in various degrees that they are more in charge of their life space than before the class. Social control is more with the self than from others, a change from how they had thought prior to the class. They are more aware of social phenomena and how they can behave to bring about desired outcomes. For example, if it is warm personal relationships that they want, then they know where it all begins. Thus they are more initiatory of the desired outcomes than they were before the class.

Would You Take This Class Again?

One hundred eleven of those reporting responded "Yes" to the question "Would you take this class again?" Comments varied from rather emphatic support statements, such as "The class was one of the most valuable classes which I have ever taken," to ambivalent responses, such as "My curiosity suggests that I answer in the affirmative; my 'horse-sense' still questions whether the group is ultimately helpful for the individual," to emphatic negative statements, such as "The class is a mind messer. Especially the marathon weekend. I lost perspective of what was truly important to me. Became too involved in other people and not enough in myself."

Twenty-two persons said "No" to the question, "Would you take this class again?" While it is gratifying to know that 111 would take the class again, the comments were positive toward the course--for example, "This class is of the type most needed to improve the quality of life people live"--it behooves the staff to increase its sensitivity to those subjects who appear to be having a negative experience. Perhaps mid-term interviews of follow-up interviews would be helpful. The above quote about the class being a "mind messer" is perhaps the most negative response received. An example of the typical "no" response would be, "It was interesting but not that helpful." This is indeed quite different from the "mind messer" statement.

A concern of the staff that has received considerable attention is the phenomenon of dependency. At one time the staff entertained the idea that dependency was all bad. However, over the years it appears that the degree of dependency warrants attention in that we are seldom, if ever, totally dependent or independent. Some people might conclude that 111 persons are highly dependent on the lab or lab-like activities for sustenance because of their willingness to take the course again. However, statements such as "Definitely yes, (it is) one of the most practical courses I have taken at ISU. (It has) been very helpful in my job and life"--and this one is not atypical--would not support a high degree of dependency. Too, one might reflect on the rather small number of persons who have continued to attend labs as further support of independency.

To What Degree Has the Course Been Helpful?

Very Helpful	58	Not Very Helpful	7
Helpful	50	Not Helpful at All	0
So-So	17		

Perhaps the following quotation from one response best exemplifies those responses in the "Very Helpful" category:

> This class has been helpful to me in that now when I am in a strange situation I remember some of the feedback I received from my actions and comments in class. It makes me try harder

to really be myself. I also am more conscious of how the others in a new group might be feeling and that they too may have some of the same fears and anxieties as I. This makes me be a little more open with them.

Also it has helped in my marriage. My husband and I have talked over problems that I tried to evade before. After this class I really tried to see another side besides my own.

And in the "Helpful" responses, "Many personal hangups of myself and others were identified and I found them relative to my work and my personal life and relationships" is somewhat typical. The "So-So" persons are small in number but generally responded with something like "To be honest, I don't know just what I gained from it. Although gaining some ideas and some insight, I don't know that my actual behavior changed as a result." The seven respondents in the "Not Very Helpful" section are best represented by "For me, the course lacked application to 'reality' . . . the course created a 'world' that was almost too unique, almost too 'helpful.'"

The positive statements are very reassuring as to the value of this course. However, the staff needs to be aware of those replies which are negative if improvements are to be made.

Describe in What Ways the Course Has Been Detrimental to You

Of the 136 responders, 31 stated that in some way the course had been detrimental to them. While the degree of intensity obviously varied, nonetheless the statements supply data which the staff needs to study and be aware of in future classes. The following quotations are somewhat typical of the less serious consequences:

For some reason it has helped me to discover that when I am not being responded to authentically I can tell and I say things which cause hostility on the part of the other person. Perhaps I need to learn how to handle the situations better.

or

None . . . except in terms of the frustration encountered in not "owning" up to feelings encountered in interpersonal relationships.

or

During the course I found it hard to separate what I was doing in class from my behavior with people outside of the class and my wife. The class was not the real world.

It appears that the staff must increase its efforts to help persons in areas of behavior such as these mentioned above. Certainly the means

are available, for example, role playing, to help increase the helpful behavior categories.

Some examples of the more serious statements in response to the "detrimental" question are:

> I believe certain kinds of compartmentalization are essential if a personality is to remain intact in a society which itself is characterized by areas which are closed to rational investigation. The course opened some areas for me (under conditions which were somewhat in violation of cultural norms) which I was ill-prepared to handle without, at the time, providing me with adequate opportunity for support and closure.

> I learned to unmask myself in class. After the class I had to relearn the entire masking process to protect myself.

> Because I felt so threatened, I was unable to deal with the one major hangup that inhibits me, the leader left me down and my self-concept, self-confidence, and ability to trust others was severely damaged.

One could guess several reasons for the detrimental effects on some participants such as that their expectations were inappropriate for the course. However, the fact remains that these subjects' responses are worthy and need to be seriously considered and dealt with in future classes.

Describe the Characteristics of a Person for Whom You Would Deem This Laboratory Course Inadvisable

The question of the characteristics of a person for whom the laboratory would be inadvisable is one which the staff has struggled with over the years and, as yet, has not been able to resolve satisfactorily. One consultant to the staff suggested that one could screen out the whole world if he used everyone's criteria. In spite of this seemingly overwhelming task, the staff continues to search for ways of avoiding harm to any human being. The information requested on the application form for the class is intended to alert the staff to any person's potential difficulties. Anyone who is undergoing any psychological treatment at the time of application is counseled with and advised to make his decision in collaboration with his therapist. Likewise, prospective members are advised that if they are seeking therapy, then this is not the class for them. Though one would be hard put to state clearly what is and what is not therapy, this class is intended for those persons who consider themselves within the range of "normal" behavior.

The subjects of this study made well over 150 responses to this query. Most of the characteristics were accompanied by a reason. The large number of responses in and of itself is perhaps significant. One inference might be that people tend to have little faith in the psychological strengths of others. For example, some would not recommend the

course for the "timid," "shy," "sensitive," "super-sensitive," "liars," and the like, terms, one would guess, having specific meanings to the contributors. The same might also be said of such terms as "psychologically unbalanced," "maladjusted," "pre-psychotic," "excessive neurotics," and so on.

Perhaps one other statement is warranted from replies of the responders their expressed concerns parallel those of the staff. The responses might also be considered to be abdications of responsibility on the part of the responders or indicate their lack of faith in groups to promote growth. Too, these responses tend to be in conflict with other responses made in the questionnaire. These contradictory responses reflect, perhaps, the ambivalences of being human. This section of the questionnaire warrants serious study by the staff or by any staff involved in conducting group dynamics laboratories.

Describe One or More Significant Decisions You Have Made Which Were Influenced by Your Experiences in the Laboratory Class

Career choices appear to dominate the responses to the request for significant decisions. For example. "decided to become a counselor," "resigned my job," "be at home with children," and the like. In the interpersonal area, several persons reported changing their dating habits, e.g., deciding not to go steady, to break up, and to date again.

To "speak up," "be more open," "more honest," "be me," and the like appeared quite often and in most cases the persons reporting felt that the results have been positive. Some reported greater independency and the expending of more energy as support persons in their relationships with others. Two people reported that they made the decision to get psychiatric help and are pleased with their decisions. And two said that they decided to never have a group encounter experience again.

Many persons qualified their responses by saying that their decisions were based on all of their experiencing and not just laboratory experiences; for example, several said that they were able to give up a secure job that they did not like and live with the insecurity of finding a more suitable career, something they felt they had not been able to do prior to the class.

Decisions to be "me" and get acquainted with that "me" and reduce the rationalizations and the projections of our feelings onto others are signs of growth that were shared by a few of the former lab members.

Describe How Friends, Relatives and Colleagues Responded to Your Participation in the Lab

As would be expected, these comments covered a wide range. For example, one subject responded, "Very mixed, from people who were anxious to participate to people who thought it involved getting naked, sex, drugs, etc."

From a scan of the replies several categories were obtained and tallies were made to determine possible trends. The positive responses outnumbered the negative about two to one. In many instances individuals reported that at first they received negative responses which later on were replaced by positive ones from the same persons. In support of the positive, the population reported a healthy curiosity or that friends, relatives and colleagues were very interested. Other descriptions included such words as "enthusiasm," "envy," "amazement," "happier," "more approachable," and "acceptance." Former lab members also mentioned quite regularly that many people responded by saying that they would like to take the class and also that several have done so as a result of their experiences.

On the less positive responses, the frequent references to parents and to spouses were impressive. Obviously these are the significant others in the lives of all people. "Misunderstanding" or "lack of understanding," "fearful," "indifferent," "disbelief," "threatened," "worried," "caustic," "uptight," "100% against," "skepticism," and "cold" or "cool" were the descriptions furnished by the former lab members as reactions from friends, relatives and colleagues. The reasons for these were often attributed to the reports of the popular media which have tended toward sensationalism. For example, two persons reported that their fellow teachers referred to the class as nothing more than "orgies," while parents and spouses saw the class experiences as disruptive of the status quo.

The staff has spent many hours discussing and attempting to cope with the negative spin-offs. One thing that needs constant attention is transfer. For example, re-entry into the "normal" society requires certain kinds of sensitivities and skills which don't always get developed in the laboratory. Perhaps for some people the task borders on the impossible when considering the family syndrome to which they return. One approach to this problem, especially true in the mental health field, is to hold labs in which the entire family participates. This would be rather difficult in a university setting but is receiving considerable attention and success in church groups and mental health clinics, for example. At ISU the staff does not leave re-entry to chance. Discussions and role playing are often used to help with the transition to back home.

In closing this section, the following quotation from one response perhaps best supports the argument for family labs: ". . . many friends thought that my wife and I should not take the lab together, but it was great for us; I think it helped in some ways to bring us closer to each other by better understanding one another."

Should There Be a Prerequisite to the Laboratory Class?

For each yes response to the question of a prerequisite there were two no's overall. Only one class reported more yes than no answers. It might prove interesting to study the data on this particular class in greater detail or even to compare it with a class reporting exactly the opposite reactions to the question. However, at this point, it is

necessary merely to call this phenomenon to the attention of the staff for possible pursuit in depth at a later date. One inference might very well be that the lab was not truly a group dynamics laboratory for this particular group. This might also be true for those persons from the other classes who see the need for extensive prerequisites.

Individual interviews between staff and potential class members ranked highest amongst the prerequisites listed. Some would limit the class to: seniors and grads only; those who "desire change;" those who have attended theory sessions, or mini-courses and/or informational seminars; while still others would require courses in personality and adjustment, or psychology, or sociology and abnormal psychology, or a background in behavioral science. Two persons suggested a 2-hour course of required readings and two others felt that the students should be told in advance what will be learned. An extensive outline of the course and expected learnings was offered by two responders. Pre-testing, or sessions with a clinical psychologist, or several interview sessions were also offered as prerequisites. One person suggested that both spouses attend orientation sessions even if only one were taking the class.

It appears to the writer that many of these persons are asking that the course somewhat follow the format of those courses that fit into their experience. Again, the data tend to suggest inadequate understandings of the nature of the course. The risk in abiding too much by these suggestions is that the class will revert to a teaching and learning situation rather than a study of the group as it builds itself toward maturity.

While it is indeed gratifying that two-thirds of those responding in this study appear to have grasped the significant learnings from the design of the class, it is equally disconcerting that one-third of the subjects did not so achieve. Thus, the staff needs to study these data and respond appropriately to the implications. Perhaps the staff should consider the use of an outside resource person in developing ways of confronting the issues involved here.

Should There Be an Advanced Lab?

There were 96 yes and 25 no responses to the question of an advanced lab. To those who responded yes, a further request was what should be included in such a lab.

More of the same, more weekend encounters and more marathons, in that order, topped the list of suggested activities for an advanced lab. Also, longer and more concentrated sessions with a minimum of interruptions from the outside was mentioned by several people. The other suggestions were for the most part only supported by one or a few persons. Of interest, however, was a suggestion (supported by four persons) that the design of the lab be built after the participants arrive on the scene. This suggestion has merit and has been carried out rather successfully by other organizations, for example, the Episcopal Dioceses of Michigan and

Ohio. Human potential exercises, non-verbals, seminars, video-taping, role playing--all a part of the regular lab class, received support from several persons. Another interesting idea and one that the staff has thought about from time to time was to have a post-lab for each class within the year. The purpose, perhaps one of several purposes, would be to consider data similar to those requested in this follow-up questionnaire. Too, it was suggested that those participants who needed specific help as a result of incomplete learnings in their lab might bring these out for the attention of the staff. Either these could be dealt with immediately or in the future, or referrals could be made to resources that might be helpful. A few persons were interested in studying the role of the trainer, how to plan and organize a learning laboratory, and further work on group processes.

The data tend to support the desire (and perhaps need) for an advanced lab. Perhaps the staff should consider offering one on an occasional basis such as once each year.

Have You Recommended the Lab to Others?
If Yes, Approximately How Many Have
Taken the Lab as a Result?

Recommending a particular course to others can perhaps be considered a measure of the value attached by the person recommending. Of the 136 persons responding, 115 said that they had recommended the class to others and 18 said that they had not done so. Some 179 persons had taken the lab as a result of these recommendations. Thus, one can conclude that these data are supportive of the value of the class.

The comments section of these two questions did not receive many responses. However, of those received perhaps two warrant mentioning. A few students to whom past members had recommended it mentioned that their curriculum did not have room for this course (not enough electives) or that they could not get in the class when they need it. Perhaps these are not serious problems in that a tally has usually been made during registration of those who could not get into the class. On a couple of occasions the number might have reached ten or twelve. In most cases they were able to get the class during another semester.

Of All Lab Experiences Which Was Least Valuable?
Most Valuable? Least Valuable?

Since the staff has not been the same for each lab, all former class members did not have the same kinds of activities. For example, two persons mentioned the montage as the least valued experience. This may be a more significant response than that of the twelve who said that the marathon was the least valuable in that all classes had a marathon experience, but all classes did not do a montage.

Of those experiences which were common to each class the larger number of responses related to "sessions held in the classroom," "use of television," "NASA decision by consensus," "Small task groups to

express learnings from the class," "sensory awareness," "weekend retreat," "role play" and "dyadic encounter," receiving from nine of three responses in that order.

No persons responding to this query appeared to be angry or extremely disappointed in relation to items mentioned as the least valued.

Most Valuable

Sixty-nine persons listed the weekend retreat (and in most cases specifying Merom) as the most valued experience. And in second place, with thirty responses, subjects listed the marathon. Experiences receiving from twelve to three responses are in descending order: awareness exercises (including touching), role playing, video-taping, dyadic encounter, human potential, and "the whole thing." Obviously, with 99 responses supporting the retreat and marathon one would be hard pressed to find an appropriate substitute for these experiences.

In support of the response of "the whole thing" it seems appropriate to include a direct quotation exemplifying behavioral change. It comes from a participant in the 1969 summer session lab and is as follows:

> At the time of the lab, I had very mixed feelings toward racial integration and generally toward black people (having voted for George Wallace just the previous November). In my group was probably one of the most sensitive human beings I have ever met and will never forget who happened to be black (named person). The changes after knowing her have been many. I am now very committed to equal rights and have become extremely active in organization promoting same, i.e., NAACP. And after living in the suburbs for one year, I decided I was being a hypocrite by saying I believed one thing and yet living another. The last two and one-half years I have lived in Inner City Indianapolis and tried to live what I believe. This alone has been an eye opener. Things just aren't the same here as they are just a few miles out in the suburbs. I'm sure (person's name) would be surprised to know of the impact she had on my life.

Please Share With Me Any Other Information That You Feel Would Be Helpful to Us in This Class

Many of the responses in this section have already been included in previous sections. Some interesting suggestions for the staff to consider were, however, mentioned here for the first time. For example, special labs limited to drug users only, same sex only, and similar ages only, were suggested as possible variations of the present lab. Too, it was suggested that the lab needs to be publicized more widely as many people are not aware of its being offered.

For the most part, the responders took advantage of this space to express their appreciation to the university and the staff for having afforded them this learning opportunity, and to encourage the continuance of the same but to include more students. Some went so far as to suggest the class as a first course in college, while others would require it of all undergraduates.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were derived from the responses received from the follow-up questionnaires of former participants in the Group Dynamics Laboratory.

1. Require a mid-term interview for each participant to review the participant's perceptions of how he sees himself in the laboratory and to establish goals.

2. Focus more attention on achieving closure with each participant at the completion of the lab.

3. Study carefully the responses to "Describe the characteristics of a person for whom you would deem the laboratory course inadvisable."

4. Determine to what extent the laboratory is truly a group dynamics laboratory.

5. Schedule a post-lab session of one or two days each year.

6. Increase attention and action regarding transfer.

7. Publicize the course more intensely as many people are not aware of its being offered or where to find it in the catalogue of offerings.

8. Give consideration to offering an advanced laboratory.

9. Conduct the weekend encounter and the marathon at an off-campus residential setting.

10. Design special labs, for drug users, same sex only, similar age groups, or the like.

PART IV

"BUT DOES IT MEAN ANYTHING?"
Sound of Music

Can we be more creative in bringing our inner needs into closer correspondence with the outer demands of our fellow humans (society)? In several studies of teacher morale, using Suehr's Teacher Morale Form, one thing has become quite clear--"The people I really know are okay, the people I don't know are not okay." Two stems on this form, "My pupils . . ." and "Children today . . .," elicit responses supportive of this statement. The implication then is for me to really know more people if I am to increase the numbers of okay people. Another way of seeing this dilemma is--the people who really know me see me as okay. And this is most important to each one of us.

When the purpose of a meeting is to hear a lecture or view a performance, then chairs in straight rows, facing the lecturer or performers, are most appropriate. But chairs in straight rows at meetings of adults and in thousands of classrooms where people only view the backs of other people's heads appear to me to be unsupportive of knowing others and especially of knowing how others are knowing me. The teacher who values having student interaction during class discussions defeats his own goal by keeping the students facing the front of the room. A person is more apt to speak if he can see what the listeners are doing with what he is saying, and eye contact helps greatly in this.

The learning laboratory and especially the T-Group as shared in this paper are conducive to knowing self and others and thus to closing the gap, or at least narrowing it, between our inner needs and the outer demands (real or imagined) of society's people and institutions. In the final analysis are we not more alike than we are different? As Carl Rogers has said, "What is most personal is most general." For each one of us this phenomenon awaits our personal discovery. The social milieu which allows and encourages this discovery brings us all closer to the ideal of self understanding. With increased self understanding achieved through active confrontation and leveling with others comes increased understanding of others and of society in general. The improved society begins with the improved self. We hear this in our churches, schools, from public officials and from many others, but the means for achievement remain hazy to the greater portion of mankind.* And, to refer back to Lewin and Grabbe's premises shared earlier in Part I--it doesn't just happen--we must translate what is known into behavior.

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*For increased understanding of this social phenomenon, read Earl C. Kelly, In Defense of Youth, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962).

One such vehicle often used to demonstrate a T-Group is the "Self-knowledge Exercise." It is a series of sentence stems which proceed from the rather impersonal to the personal, somewhat paralleling the phases of group growth. The first stem is "When I enter a new group, I feel . . ." In most cases when people write a completion to this stem while sitting in a new group and then share what they wrote, they discover that their completions are similar and often identical. For example, a common completion is "anxious" or a like word, e.g., "scared." As the participants continue writing completions, for example--"Love is . . ."--they discover that as they move into more personal or intimate areas, they feel greater reluctance to share what they wrote. And in some cases they choose not to write anything down at all. This exercise merely begins the process of group building; much more work remains to be done to translate knowing into behaving, as pointed out by Lewin and Grabbe. I have participated in this exercise hundreds of times and each time I discover something about myself that I did not know before, perhaps due to the different populations or to my experiences since the last participation (Atkins, 1967, pp. 4-6). Changing cognition isn't necessarily followed by ego and super-ego changes or behavioral change. "Re-education is frequently in danger of reaching only the official system of values, the level of verbal expression and not of conduct; it may result in merely heightening the discrepancy between super-ego (the way I ought to feel) and ego (the way I really feel), and thus give the individual a bad conscience. Such a discrepancy leads to a state of high emotional tension but seldom to correct conduct. It may postpone transgressions but is likely to make transgressions more violent when they occur . . ." (Lewin, p. 59), a state not unlike that called "gunnysacking" in transactional analysis.

The T-Group is still considered by many people as one of the most powerful learning processes invented during this century. The T-Group is,

> Devoted to the mutual facilitation of learning by all its members. A major content of the learning sought is the developing experience of the group and its members in here-and-now behavioral events. Each member is encouraged to function as observer-participant, as diagnostician-actor, as planner-executor-evaluator, as theorist-practitioner, as expresser of feeling and critic of expression, and as helper-client. (Bradford, 1964, pp. 122-123)

Values

In recent years some social scientists have been working on values clarification (Raths, 1966; Simon, 1972; Howe, 1973). The term alone has merit for re-education if the goal is one of including people. Clarification implies non-judgment, although many subjects tend to hear judgment in the title anyhow. Becoming more keenly aware of our values and exploring the deeper meanings in concert with others in the climate of the laboratory (such as described herein) allows for problem identification and self-directed change.

Values clarification exercises are usually personal assessments of values. These may be chosen from a prescribed list or they may be derived from a specified category, for example, values held about your family, your personhood, etc. The reader who wishes to pursue these techniques further is referred to the resource books in the bibliography. The point to be made by mentioning value clarification in this booklet is to emphasize again, "It's not what you do, it's the way that you do it."

Basic Needs Areas

William Schutz (Schutz, 1966) in building his Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation-Behavior Scales lists three basic need areas of persons in groups. These are (1) inclusion, (2) control, and (3) affection. He further divides each variable into sub-parts for purposes of his scales and to illustrate phenomena present in groups. Each basic need area is divided into expressed--that which I will give; and wanted--that which I need from you (others). It is these areas of basic needs which cause people to behave the way they do in groups. For example, one common question (usually not openly expressed) is "What is the cost of membership in this group (inclusion)?" Let's take one of the extremes. For an example, a person cries in the group and is perceived immediately as having achieved membership. "Wow! the price of admission is to cry. No way will I ever get into this group." To deal with the deeper meanings for each person of these basic need areas requires a trusting climate, one in which each member feels that he has had a strong personal investment in bringing it about. The degree of trust will no doubt vary for each person and thus only he knows what that is for him. Everyone has a wealth of information such as this which needs to be in the group (public) before each person can appropriately respond to the dimensions of inclusion, control and affection. When one attempts to visualize the magnitude of the varying degrees and complexities of these phenomena in any given group the task is overwhelming for any one person. Thus, in a climate of trust where distortions of information can be cleared and where needed information need not be withheld increased understanding can and does occur.

The present state of the laboratory approach to learning is stated rather succinctly and to the point by Robert Golembewski and Arthur Blumberg in the introduction to their text, Sensitivity Training and the Laboratory Approach.

> The laboratory approach uses a variety of ways and means of getting at experiential learning. The "T-Group" is the best known vehicle in this repertoire. It involves a small group of people intent on exploring their own interpersonal and group relations with the help of a trainer. There are, however, diverse ways of including similar learning processes. For example, these other vehicles for experiential learning include "confrontation designs," "third-party interceptions," and a host of other spin-offs of the T-Group and its underlying processes. In a significant sense, the T-Group is a kind of ideal learning

environment, then. Its properties can be diversely approximated but often cannot be, or need to be, duplicated in the world outside of the sensitivity training laboratory.

Describing what processes and outcomes the laboratory approach does induce is even more difficult than illustrating the diverse forms which its learning environments do take. For example, "feedback" is one of the basic processes that is induced in unusually direct form in the T-Group. Narrowly, feedback processes involve the ways in which people learn about the imapct they are having on others. Broadly, but still validly, feedback processes touch the very heart of how people come to be what they are. Put otherwise, feedback processes are basic in human development and change.

The brief description above of feedback, and of its diverse human relevance and significance, in effect, drive home a significant point about the fullness of the laboratory approach. Let us make explicit what that description implies. Without gilding the lily, we know both practically and theoretically that feedback processes are significant. How feedback can be made more effective is one of the significant learnings to which the laboratory approach can contribute. Cognitive knowledge, as it were, can mother applied inventions. Perhaps of even greater significance, the laboratory approach can also demonstrate to people how much they depend on the quality and quantity of their feedback. In turn, such a personal insight reinforces the need to develop appropriate attitudes and better skills for giving and receiving feedback. These attitudes and skills are critical in determining the quality of one's interpersonal and group experiences; and their development is a difficult as well as a precious thing. This significance and difficulty both suggest the formidable nature of the task to which the laboratory approach seeks to contribute. (Golembiewski & Blumberg, 1973, pp. X-XI)

The following quotation from the Adjusted American: Normal Neuroses in the Individual and Society by Snell and Gail J. Putney, to me, lends a tremendous amount of support to laboratory education. And perhaps it is an appropriate way to reach closure on this booklet.

The adjusted American lacks self-approval; that is to say, he has not developed a self-image that he can believe is both accurate and acceptable. To do so he would require successful techniques for creating an accurate and acceptable self-image through honest introspection, candid association, and meaningful activity. The patterns to which he has adjusted do not include such techniques. Instead, the culture abounds with misdirections, which the adjusted American acquires. (Putney, Putney, 1964, pp. 63-64)

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